

Unfortunately, according to the Mental Health Association the unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities is approximately 75 percent, and for those with psychiatric disabilities it is at almost 80 percent. Some of these statistics can be attributed to those individuals with such severe disabilities that they are unable to work, however much of that percentage is made up of individuals with disabilities who have never had the training or help they need to find the jobs they can do.

The need for a company like Bayaud Industries is clear. Bayaud provides an invaluable link between individuals with disabilities and employment. By being that link they are changing lives on a daily basis. They make a difference every day by opening doors for members of America's disabled community that many of them never knew existed before.

CITIZENS OF LIBERIA

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, tonight, while the President of the United States is visiting Senegal and other countries in Africa, I rise to address the House to express my concern for the citizens of Liberia. Liberia is an African nation that was founded in 1820 by freed Black slave men and women from the United States. The nation, considered to be the only U.S. colony in Africa, was founded with a grant of \$100,000. Its capital, Monrovia, is named after the United States fifth president, James Monroe. By 1847, thousands of freed slaves had immigrated to Liberia from the United States. They declared independence and the commonwealth of Liberia became the Republic of Liberia.

Liberia's recently-deposed president, Charles Taylor, seized power in 1997 after leading a seven year insurrection, which claimed the lives of thousands of Liberian Africans against his predecessor, Samuel Doe. Taylor, an accused embezzler and protégée of Libyan dictator, Col. Mu'ammal al-Qadhafi, spread terror throughout Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and Guinea. Taylor's human rights abuses include the use of child soldiers and funding terrorist organizations with money from blood diamond mines.

On June 4, 2003, the United Nations supported an indictment of President Taylor by a Special Court in Sierra Leone, at the same time a group of West African Presidents were meeting with Taylor and others in Ghana to discuss efforts to negotiate a peace agreement.

During the negotiations, President Taylor [said he would step aside if it would bring peace to his war torn country]. On Sunday, July 6, 2003, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria announced that Taylor agreed to leave Liberia under certain conditions and with certain guarantees. President Obasanjo stated that what was happening in Liberia could happen anywhere in Africa. Liberia, he said, needed relief from dictatorship so that the entire region wouldn't be affected by the errant regime in that nation.

Mr. Speaker, thus far, there has not been a successor named to govern Liberia. The leaders from the 16 Liberian opposition political

parties in the nation, as well as leaders from religious and women's organizations, have been meeting in Ghana to draw up a peace plan and establish a transitional government expected to run the country for 18 to 24 months before new elections can be held.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Britain and France have asked the United States to lead, at least initially—a peace-keeping operation designed to separate and disarm the warring factions and establish an environment where a transitional government can take control of the country. ECOWAS has pledged 3,000 troops for an intervention force and is asking the United States to pledge 2,000 troops in this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you, and my colleagues support the Liberian people's struggle to return their country to sane and just rule. Liberia has been a friend and a supporter of the United States. It was an ally during the Cold War and a facilitator of covert operations against Col. Mu'ammal al-Qadhafi during the 1980s. It would be a betrayal of that long-held trust to turn our backs on the people of Liberia who have supported us in the past.

Liberia's natural resources are plentiful. The country has iron ore, rubber, timber, diamonds, gold and tin. In addition, in recent years that it has discovered sizable deposits of crude oil along its Atlantic Coast, and it continues to make strides in the agriculture sector. We need to work with the local communities and provide assistance in the areas of development, policing, healthcare.

Mr. Speaker, Liberia has the potential of re-establishing a strong democratic model of liberation and justice for the continent. We must do whatever we can to assist the Liberians—these proud people of liberty—rebuild their beautiful country.

DISEASE PREVENTION IN MEDICARE

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to submit into the Record a letter I have received from seven former Secretaries of the Department of Health and Human Services and its predecessor, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The letter, sent to many Members of Congress, and especially to the leadership of both bodies, requests that during our work on Medicare modernization we not forget about the benefits of disease prevention.

The letter specifically references a report by Partnership For Prevention, "A Better Medicare for Healthier Seniors: Recommendations to Modernize Medicare's Prevention Policies," which states that Medicare should increase its emphasis on keeping seniors healthy, not just treating them when they become sick, as a roadmap for a modernizing Medicare's prevention practices.

The Partnership For Prevention (PFP) is a highly respected non-profit partnership of public and private sector organizations committed to finding solutions to health issues in a non-partisan and rigorously scientific manner. The report and other recommendations can be viewed and downloaded at the PFP Web site, <http://www.prevent.org>.

I encourage my colleagues to read the attached letter, look at the Partnership For Prevention report and consider their recommendations in our further efforts to modernize Medicare.

THE FORMER SECRETARIES OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND
HEALTH EDUCATION AND WELFARE
JUNE 25, 2003.

Hon. JIM RAMSTAD,
*U.S. Representative, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC 20515.*

DEAR MR. RAMSTAD, as former Secretaries of Health and Human Services (or Health, Education and Welfare), we write to encourage you to include disease prevention in discussions about Medicare modernization.

Congress created Medicare in 1965 based on the knowledge of health and medicine at that time. Thus, Medicare came into being as a national insurance system to cover hospitalization and visits to clinicians' offices for diagnoses and treatment.

In the nearly four decades since Medicare's creation, considerable research and practice have yielded proven ways to not just diagnose and treat disease, but to prevent it and promote longer, healthier life. Today we know that postponing disability, maintaining social function, and sustaining independence are achievable for seniors through evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention services. It is nearly always preferable, both for the individual and for society, to prevent disease instead of waiting to treat it.

Congress has added selected preventive services to Medicare but has not included other services that are proven effective, nor has it encouraged Medicare to take a comprehensive approach to disease prevention and health promotion for America's seniors.

A recent Harris Poll found that nine in ten American adults want Medicare to be modernized and to put as much emphasis on disease prevention as it does on disease treatment.

The roadmap for this Medicare modernization is laid out in a new Partnership for Prevention (Partnership) report, A Better Medicare for Healthier Seniors: Recommendations to Modernize Medicare's Prevention Policies, which you already have received. These recommendations would move the U.S. toward realization of our nation's two overarching national health goals: Increasing life expectancy and improving quality of life, and reducing disparities in health among different segments of the population.

Respectfully yours,

JOSEPH A. CALAFANO, JR.
RICHARD S. SCHWEIKER.
MARGARET M. HECKLER.
DAVID MATHEWS, MD.
LOUIS W. SULLIVAN, MD.
DONNA E. SHALALA, PhD.
OTIS R. BOWEN, MD.

TRIBUTE TO RODNEY C. LESTER, PhD, CNRA

HON. JOHN ABNEY CULBERSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute today to an outstanding representative from the State of Texas, Rodney C. Lester, PhD, CRNA. Dr. Lester will soon complete his year as national president of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA). I am very pleased that one of Texas's own was tapped as the 2002–2003 president of this prestigious national organization.

Founded in 1931, the AANA is the professional organization that represents more than 30,000 practicing Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs). CRNAs administer more than 65 percent of the anesthetics given to patients each year in the United States. They provide anesthesia for all types of surgical cases and are the sole anesthesia provider in two-thirds of all rural hospitals, providing these medical facilities with obstetrical, surgical, and trauma stabilization capabilities. They work in every setting in which anesthesia is delivered including hospital surgical suites, obstetrical delivery rooms, ambulatory surgical centers, and the offices of dentists, podiatrists, and plastic surgeons.

Dr. Lester received his PhD in health education from Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas; his master's of science in nursing from the University of Tennessee, Memphis, Tennessee; and his master's in business administration from Drury College Breech School of Business, Springfield, Missouri. He is currently the Nurse Anesthesia Division director and associate professor of clinical nursing at the University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston, School of Nursing. He also serves as a member on the Admissions, Progression and Graduation Committee at the school. Previously, he was the director for the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Department of Anesthesiology and Critical Care in Houston, Texas.

Dr. Lester has served terms as president and vice president for the Texas Association of Nurse Anesthetists. Adding to his professional accomplishments, Dr. Lester has become nationally recognized in both publishing and speaking on anesthesia-related topics over the years.

In addition to his service to the AANA, Dr. Lester served his country in the United States Army as an officer and certified registered nurse anesthetist. He recently retired from the Army after 5 years active duty and 24 years as a reservist.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Dr. Rodney Lester, PhD, CRNA, for his notable career and outstanding achievements.

H. CON. RES. 210 HONORING SPECIALIST SHOSHANA JOHNSON FORMER IRAQI POW

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I am announcing the introduction of H. Con. Res. 210 honoring Army Spc. Shoshana Nyree Johnson, former POW in Iraq, and the first African-American woman POW.

Specialist Johnson was deployed to the Persian Gulf region as a member of the Army's 507th Maintenance Company. On March 23, 2003, Iraqi Troops ambushed her unit in Nsiriyah, Iraq, and Specialist Johnson and five other members of her unit were captured and held as prisoners of war. Specialist Johnson, four other members of her unit, and two helicopter pilots were rescued by United States Marines on April 13, 2003.

Specialist Johnson, who suffered gunshot wounds in both ankles, displayed extraor-

dinary courage and valor during her 21-day ordeal, and outstanding dignity since her release.

She was honored on Capitol Hill on June 12, 2003, at an event hosted by the Congressional Black Caucus. Specialist Johnson described her experience as "just doing her job," and asked for prayers for those still fighting in Iraq. She also remembered fellow POW Private First Class Jessica Lynch, a member of her unit who was also captured and released. The humility of her remarks reflected the hero that she is.

H. Con. Res. 210 honors Specialist Shoshana Johnson for her sacrifice and for representing the highest ideals of service in the United States Armed Forces. To cosponsor this Resolution, please call Jean Mathis of my staff on extension 54365.

NORTON FILES BILL TO AUTHORIZE ANNUAL FUNDING FOR TRANSFORMATION SCHOOLS AND CHARTER SCHOOLS

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following for the RECORD:

Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) today introduced the Model Alternative Publicly Accountable Schools Act of 2003 to allow the District to use its unique experience in establishing an unusual number and variety of successful publicly accountable alternatives to its traditional public schools in an effort to encourage other school districts to do the same and to provide additional funding to allow the city to continue these efforts, which are now threatened by cuts and a shortage of funds. Norton said that nationally, the Congress has been unwilling to fund private school vouchers and has had very limited success in getting school districts to establish public alternatives such as charter schools. (For example, Virginia has eight charters and Maryland has one, while the District has 42). Locally, she said that H.R. 2556—the D.C. Parental Choice Incentive Act of 2003—would authorize private school vouchers but without her bill there would be no bill authorizing funds for the city's transformation and charter schools that would treat these parents and children equally, as even voucher advocates say is necessary. In addition, Norton said, in a year when both D.C. and the federal government have cut school funding, her bill providing funds for publicly accountable schools would free up scarce D.C. funds for use in traditional public schools. The D.C. Public Schools last week cut 422 positions to help meet a \$40.4 million shortfall, including \$6.5 million in funds for textbooks. However, the voucher bill will result in a minimum loss of \$25,114,000 if 2,000 students exit the public schools altogether next year because D.C. and federal law require that schools be funded on a per pupil basis.

The Norton bill would authorize a total of \$15 million for the first of five years of funding. In the FY 04 budget, \$12 million would fund and expand transformation schools based on a congressional finding that the District has significantly improved the performance of its poorest and lowest performing children in transformation schools. She said that the improvements in test scores and parental involvement were directly related to extra services provided only

to transformation school children and parents. These improvements for they city's low-income children cannot be expected to continue if these services are withdrawn, as cuts now are forcing, she said.

A total of \$3 million in FY '04 would fund public charter schools in recognition of heightened demand, long waiting lists, and unavailability of funds for facilities to meet a demand the city has shown it cannot meet. Norton said that a particularly large number of schools had applied for charter school status for the coming school year and that the \$3 million was important to expand the direct loan fund to assure that start-up charter schools would have the necessary head start to lease facilities in D.C.'s costly rental market. In the remaining four years of the Norton bill, allocation of funds between charter and transformation schools would be done by the City Council after hearings based on the demonstrated needs and gaps in both.

The Congresswoman said that sporadic and ad hoc funding for charter schools from Congress demonstrate the necessity for a specific authorization. Last year, the House did not fund charter schools at all, but working with the Senate, Norton got \$17 million for charters to help ease facilities pressures. "This was done without slogans about funding multiple sectors," she said, "and funds may come on an episodic basis again. However, no one should mistake any funds we may get without an authorization this year or in the future, for the authorized amount for vouchers that is designed to guarantee an annual appropriation. Only a comparable authorization can do for charter schools and transformation schools what H.R. 2556 does in authorizing a specific amount for private school vouchers."

Norton said that the voucher intervention by federal authorities "has been a distraction from the expressed desires and needs of the majority of the city's parents and children and has done a disservice to the District's leadership role in carrying out two congressional statutes"—the charter school provision of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994, which Funded charter schools nationally, and Section 1115 of the No Child Left Behind Act, which encourages schools such as D.C.'s transformation schools. Norton is also one of the authors of the District of Columbia School Reform Act of 1995, written on a home rule basis with D.C. officials and residents.

Norton said that her bill is also necessary because the President's visit last week shows that his administration intends no extra funds for charter schools, because he spoke only of funds that are available to all charter schools nationally, despite demand here that far outstrips the available funds and despite D.C.'s record of establishing charter schools in particularly significant numbers, as Congress intended. She said without explicit authorization, charter and transformation schools would be left to the mercy of appropriation committees, which are free to fund whatever programs they desire while vouchers would be authorized for finds on an annual basis.

AFRICA

HON. DIANE E. WATSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank ELIJAH CUMMINGS, Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, for once again holding this very timely and important discussion on Africa.